

Kazakhstan



Online Engagement with Religious Materials

Sunni Muslims who do not subscribe to the state-sanctioned form of Islam are often targeted for their peaceful, online religious activities. Unduly restrictive and arbitrarily enforced legislation cracking down on so-called “public calls for terrorism” and “incitement of religious discord” have resulted in fines and prison sentences for expressing religious views and posting about Islam, religious texts, and sermons.

WhatsApp Group Discussion on Islam

In 2018, authorities arrested nine individuals on bogus charges of inciting religious discord and promoting terrorism for their participation in a peaceful, online WhatsApp discussion on Islam. Despite a 2021 UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention decision calling for their release, three individuals remain in prison.



Anatoli Zernichenko

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Sunni Muslim

ARRESTED:

October 15, 2021

SENTENCE:

7 Years' Imprisonment

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Posting religious texts online



Beket Mynbasov

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Sunni Muslim

ARRESTED:

October 27, 2018

SENTENCE:

7 Years, 6 Months' Imprisonment



Samat Adilov

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Sunni Muslim

ARRESTED:

October 27, 2018

SENTENCE:

5 Years, 6 Months' Imprisonment



Ernar Samatov

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Sunni Muslim

ARRESTED:

October 27, 2018

SENTENCE:

7 Years, 6 Months' Imprisonment



Dilmurat Makhamatov

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Sunni Muslim

ARRESTED:

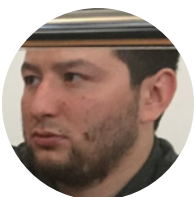
December 19, 2018

SENTENCE:

8 Years' Imprisonment

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Making comments about Islam that were later posted online by another individual



Dadash Mazhenov

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Sunni Muslim

ARRESTED:

April 23, 2018

SENTENCE:

7 Years, 8 Months' Imprisonment

REPORTS OF TORTURE:

Yes

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Posting religious content online

FoRB Victims List Stats 15 out of 2,125

Religion or Belief	# of Victims	Type of Abuse	# of Victims
Sunni	15	Imprisoned	15
Total	15	Total	15

Average Prison Sentence 6 Years, 8 Months

Reports of	# of Victims
Torture	2
Medical Neglect	0
Total	2

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Frank R. Wolf FoRB Victims List Background

The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA), as amended by the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 2016, requires USCIRF to:

make publicly available, to the extent practicable...lists of persons it determines are imprisoned or detained, have disappeared, been placed under house arrest, been tortured, or subjected to forced renunciation of faith for their religious activity or religious freedom advocacy by the government of a foreign country that the Commission recommends for designation as a country of particular concern [CPC]...or by a nonstate actor that the Commission recommends for designation as an entity of particular concern [EPC].

USCIRF developed the Frank R. Wolf Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Victims List—an online public database—to implement this provision for countries USCIRF recommends for Country of Particular Concern (CPC) or Special Watch List (SWL) status. The list also includes such victims located in the de facto territories of nonstate actors that USCIRF recommends for Entity of Particular Concern (EPC) status, according to the same criteria.

Due to limited resources, USCIRF is unable to identify and document all victims that meet the statutory requirement to be included on the FoRB Victims List and generally relies on receiving submissions from outside individuals and organizations. As such, the information contained in the database does not reflect country, regional, or global trends. Furthermore, percentages highlighted in this section should not be used for extrapolation purposes nor interpreted as a particular group experiencing greater violations than another or a particular country committing violations at a greater rate than others. To support this project, USCIRF invites those with credible information on victims to submit information using the Victims List Intake Form at www.uscifr.gov/form/uscifr-victims-list-intake-form.

FoRB Victims List Stats Overall

Perpetrator	Victims Documented
Algeria	5
Azerbaijan	11
Burma	5
China	770
Cuba	11
Egypt	18
Eritrea	50
Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)	2
Houthis	3
India	55
Indonesia	8
Iran	339
Iraq	2
Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP)	1
Kazakhstan	15
Malaysia	4
Nicaragua	15
Nigeria	9
North Korea	9
Pakistan	90
Russia	449
Saudi Arabia	46
Sri Lanka	1
Tajikistan	13
Turkmenistan	30
Uzbekistan	87
Vietnam	77
Total	2,125

Religion or Belief	Victims Documented
Adivasi	1
Baha'i	163
Bon	1
Buddhist – Hoa Hao	6
Buddhist – Theravada	3
Buddhist – Tibetan	76
Buddhist – Unspecified/Other	28
Christian – Catholic	46
Christian – Church of Almighty God	236
Christian – Jehovah's Witness	258
Christian – Orthodox	17
Christian – Protestant	130
Christian – Unspecified/Other	66
Duong Van Minh	4
ECKist (Eckankar)	1
Erfan-e Halgheh Practitioner	2
Falun Gong	213
Hindu	10
Humanist	1
Jewish	1
Muslim – Ahmadiyya	23
Muslim – Qur'anist	1
Muslim – Shi'a	39
Muslim – Sufi	63
Muslim – Sunni	385
Muslim – Unspecified/Other	237
Santeria	5
Scientologist	1
Shaman	1
Sikh	1
Yarsani	37
Unknown/Unspecified	69
Total	2,125

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Not Released

Abdukhalil Abduzhabbarov
Anatoli Zernichenko
Beket Mynbasov
Dadash Mazhenov
Dilmurat Makhamatov
Ernar Samatov
Esim Suleimenov
Galymzhan Abilkairov
Nazim Abdrakhmanov
Samat Adilov

Released

Azamat Umbetaliyev
Bolatbek Nurgaliyev
Zhasulan Iskakov
Zhuldyzbek Taurbekov

Unknown

Nariman Seytzhano